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SOCIAL SCIENCE EVIDENCE AND RESEARCH IN LEGAL SETTINGS (256F)

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PROFESSOR JOHN HAGAN

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# Social Science Evidence and Research in Legal Settings

1987-88

John Hagan

1. "The Logic of Sociological Analysis" <i>Foundations of Analysis</i> .....	1
2. "Methods of Utilizing Available Statistical Data: Lasp Case Studies" .....	21
3. "Declaration of Leonard H. Goodman, Ph.D." .....	78
4. Monthly Labor Review, April 1969 .....	83
5. "How to Conduct a Survey" .....	91
6. Bureau of Social Science Research, Inc. "General Editing and Coding Instructions" .....	129
7. Selected Bibliography .....	165
8. John Hagan, "Extra-Legal Attributes and Criminal Sentencing: An Assessment of a Sociological Viewpoint" (1974) 8:3 Law & Society Review 357. ....	167
9. Franklin M. Fisher, "Multiple Regression in Legal Proceedings" (1980) 80:4 Columbia Law Review 702. ....	194
10. John Hagan, "Criminal Justice and Native People: A Study of Incarceration in a Canadian Province" (1974) Canadian Review of Sociology and Anthropology 220. ....	231
11. Ilene H Nagel, John L Hagan, "The Sentencing of White-Collar Criminals in Federal Courts: A Socio-Legal Exploration of Disparity" (1982) Michigan Law Review 1427. ....	248
12. Richard Lempert, "Strategies of Research Design in the Legal Impact Study: The Control of Plausible Rival Hypotheses" Law and Society Review. ....	287



CHAPTER V. METHODS OF UTILIZING AVAILABLE STATISTICAL  
DATA: LASP CASE STUDIES

Introduction

In this chapter we draw on four cases from the files of the Legal Action Support Project to provide a framework for illustrating techniques we have found useful in locating, processing and effectively presenting available statistical data in support of court actions brought by Legal Services attorneys. Each of them is treated here as a case study. The legal problem in each instance and the resulting research problems are briefly described to provide the necessary background for a presentation of methods of analysis, which constitutes the major part of the chapter. Each method (e.g., aggregating scattered data into single tables or graphically presenting statistical data) is illustrated by the actual work we did in a particular case. The methods discussed here represent neither very elementary nor very complicated techniques commonly employed in processing and analyzing social data.

Case Study A: The Relationship Between Poverty  
and Race in New York City

The Problem

This case study derives from research assistance given to Legal Services attorneys who brought suit against the United States and a large private rental organization in New York City. The suit concerned the rights of welfare recipients to obtain housing in the private sector.

The rental organization, managing more than 20,000 apartments, had reached an agreement with the U.S. Government (resulting from a



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166  
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